PhD Final Exam

The supervisory committee also serves as the student's examining committee for the final exam, the traditional PhD thesis defense. One full quarter must elapse between the quarter in which the general exam is taken and the quarter in which the final is taken.

Final Exam Checklist

Please consult this checklist for details about the timeline and your responsibilities:

Basic requirements:

☐ Be registered for the quarter in which both the final exam and the dissertation is submitted.

☐ Confirm you have satisfied the Graduate School's Doctoral Degree Requirements as well as the Mathematics Program requirements.

4 months prior to exam:

☐ Review your current supervisory committee and notify Sarah Garner (sterrs@uw.edu) of any changes. This committee will be the individuals attending your final exam.

☐ Establish a reading committee by emailing Sarah Garner your list of members. The reading committee will be the faculty approving your dissertation and typically are the same members as your supervisory committee with the exception of your GSR.

2 months prior:

☐ Set an exam day and time with your committee. Location should be arranged through Sarah.

☐ Collect and collate concurrences (email is ok) from all faculty on the supervisory committee, indicating their agreement on the requested date and time. Forward to Sarah Garner for approval records.

5 weeks prior:

☐ Provide a dissertation draft to your reading committee. We also recommend sending a copy to any supervisory committee members not on your reading committee with instructions that they are not required to read the draft or provide comments unless they wish to.

☐ Submit the exam request online through MyGrad Student View.

☐ You should now consider the timing of your defense and dissertation submission.

2 weeks prior:
You should receive an email approving your exam request if your committee agrees that you are prepared to defend your dissertation. If you do not receive this, ask Sarah Garner.

Discuss the content and timing of your thesis defense presentation with your advisor.

At the exam:

Plan to give a presentation for your public thesis defense. You may also be asked additional questions by the committee in a private session after the public talk.

Your supervisory committee will decide the outcome of the exam and sign the exam warrant, which is a document provided by Math Student Services.

After the exam:

An email will be sent to you with the outcome of your exam.

Approximately 4 months after the final exam and submitting your dissertation, you will receive your diploma in the mail. If you need degree verification earlier than this, you may be able to use the online UW degree validation service.

Dissertation submission

Speak with your research adviser regarding the content of the dissertation. Review the Required Sections for your dissertation.

Attend a Graduate School Dissertation webinar or watch a recording of the most recent webinar online.

Submit your dissertation by 11:59 p.m. PST on the last day of the quarter. Grad School Thesis/Dissertations

Obtain your reading committee signatures through the online portal. Ask your reading committee to log in to this website MyGrad Committee View. Your committee needs to sign off on your dissertation by the last day of the quarter in which you are graduating. Remember, this approval is not the exam warrant your committee signed at your final exam. The committee members do not get a notification that their approval is waiting, so you should send them the link when you are ready.

Before leaving the department:

Check in with the Mathematics main office to obtain an office check-out form and learn the procedure for returning keys. There are several administrative items, such as payroll and computing services that you will need to address before departure.

Complete the American Mathematical Society (AMS) survey and turn it in to Math Student Services, PDL C-36.

Clean up desk space in your office, including shredding any old exams/homework. Please refer to the University's retention policy for details on what documents to dispose of and when you are allowed to do so. Any documents containing student ID numbers, names or grades must be shredded.

Questions?

Ask the Graduate Program Coordinator or Sarah Garner.

Department of Mathematics